



Pam.
Africa
Congo

AMONG THE AZANDI.

Letter No. 7.

Dom 401
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"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Is. ix., 2.
"The entrance of Thy Words giveth light." Ps. 119-130.

HEART OF AFRICA MISSION,

11.30 a.m. Saturday.

NALA, November 21st, 1914.

We got here from Poko at 4.30 yesterday afternoon and here I found the following telegram awaiting us:—

"Reinforcements coming. Party of 7 arrive Rejaf, Nov. 6th. Will come thro' as quickly as possible." William Roome. It is splendid but most difficult to realise! I intended to hurry off to Niangara to-day but it has rained all day so we have decided to be Jews this week and are keeping our Sunday to-day and leave to-morrow. We both need the rest after heavy days over slippery forest roads and speaking to the people at every stop, so I look on the rain as a merciful provision for us. It is wonderful that the party should have been delayed till now, I hope we have got concessions at Poko and Bambi and Zobia all awaiting them, not to speak of Niangara and Nala. I hope to be back at Niangara on Tuesday and then shall go off to meet the party. Metaxas says they will be at Aba, November 20th—yesterday—so I probably meet them at Dungu.

And now for our doings:—

We stayed at Poko until Saturday, and got all the papers done and now I hope we shall be able to go there at once if necessary. I finally applied for only three Hectres as four made complications with a stream and also Floridon* said you are expected to keep the whole of your concession clean. I can't imagine a finer place than that site and the wonderful thing was it was just 250 metres from the shooting range, and you are not allowed a concession nearer than that. Floridon has sanctioned our going there and now it only needs the Commissioners leave to make the place ours. We had a hot march on Saturday as we waited to mend up the bike but could do nothing with it—the tyres are quite worn out. We spent Sunday at Zara, a small Barambo chief. We had three meetings for him and his people. In the afternoon Ganji's son Rukuruma turned up, so now we have three boys with us—Fio (Feeo), Kumbaio and Rukuruma. The first is Akengai's son and so an Avungura. He is still a very small, but sturdy, quiet and shy. Kumbyio is one of Akengai's boys. He is Barambo, a most cheertful individual and inclined to cheek the other boys and so get his head punched for him, when he comes and complains to me and I give him the comfort of telling him he got what he deserved! Rukuruma is also quiet and well behaved and he and Fio have been a great advertisement to us as we have been travelling from Poko.

Monday night we slept at the junction of the Tely River with the Bomokandi, but had a slow march there owing to the two flooded and unbridged rivers. We waded the first and just as we had got wet the canoe for which we had waited two hours arrived. Crossing the Bomokandi next day we got into Azandi territory and also the forest. All the land between the Tely and Bomokandi belongs to an old Avungura—Garnu by name. His two oldest sons are Garnbavudu and Eliwa. We reached Garnbavudu for Tuesday night. The road branches to Rungu half an hour before his village. His elder brother Eliwa is about two hours toward Rungu. Garnbavudu was rather a dull person but quite pleasant and we spoke to a lot of his people in a big open shed. Two of my boys—the ones who brought my letters from Niangara—continue to pray each day at prayers and both have been interpreting into Azandi for us during these days. Their names are Renzi and Paddy. The others only pray occasionally and I fear have gone back since Poko partly I am afraid owing to the influence of the Baganda Peter, who prides himself on knowing all about Christianity but lives out very little. Pray especially for Paddy and Renzi. They are so affectionate, but have much to learn as yet.

From Garnbavudu we went S.E., crossing the Tely and after a long march, reached the place of the patriarch Garnu. He was a tall man, wearing the ordinary bark cloth and a network cap under usual native straw fez. He had a small beard but his face might well have belonged to some old English gentleman but for the colour. When we were seated he sat down on a red waterbuck skin and his sister sat beside him on one of the women's stools. His people treated him with great reverence. None would sit close to him and even his sons when I wanted to take a photo of them as a family would hardly be persuaded to approach nearer than about three yards to him. No one spoke except in whispers, and anyone going to speak to him privately would practically crawl to him and retire backwards. Garnbavudu had given us a most excellent guide and he interpreted for us. We had a meeting before sunset, Garnu occasionally interrupting

* The Belgian official in charge.

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to say what we said was good and they all believed it all or to ask some question such as "When would Christ return" or "What did God think of their medicine men." After dark his fourth son Tutua remained and we continued to speak to him and he began to ask questions when his old father returned and no one would then speak. We gave Garnu, his sister, and son tea and I shewed them my Cinemetograph i.e. family photos and maps. He flooded us with eggs, oil, etc., and gave the porters meat and cooked corn, beans and bananas. In return our present was ten francs, two bowls and an aluminium cup, with which he seemed pleased, Mr. Haas explaining how much we would like to give him a bigger present but we had nothing with us, and he replying that it was a most generous present and it didn't matter at all. You have no idea what it is to stand before kings!

I forgot to say we had a great welcome to his village. First a soldier met us, running up streaming with perspiration and bringing a spear for each of us as a welcoming present. Next his band of 20 wives appeared and then a lot of his men, messengers being sent off at various intervals to inform Garnu how near we were, and added to all there were groups along the road to shake hands and stare. The women would do most of the former and the men the latter. I suppose we are the first white men to take an interest in the women and their welcome, as they come timidly up to shake hands with their smiling faces and muttered "Sene Mokoto" (Good-day, Chief) I think goes to the heart more than any other. I think half-a-dozen of these women at a missionary meeting would fetch out a party of ladies in less time than all the missionary addresses rolled in one. On Thursday we sent off our porters early and waited for another meeting. Tutua, who is a most pleasant man with a smiling face and black beard, was there with 2 other sons and about 200 people. We sat under a tree on a small mound. The people sat in a semi-circle on the ground before us, with Tutua and his brothers on chairs in front of them. To the left of Mr. Haas sat old Garnu and his sister, still on his red waterbuck skin, while between us sat Zanga, Mr. Haas's boy to interpret. Mr. Haas spoke first and told the story of the life of Christ and then I spoke on eggs, washing Joe, snakes getting out of their old skins and several other parables, for which you must make up your own meaning and interpretation. The meeting didn't end till 11.30 and it took another half hour to get off. Of course the sons expected presents and one came definitely up and asked me. I replied I had none as I was travelling light. He would not give up tho', so I told him my present was that I had left my home and everything to give him the word of God. He said that was very good but he wanted a present. I replied, "You want something to remember me by, is that it?" "Yes." "Well you are a fine fellow," I went on "that's what I want everyone to do, come, let's shake hands," and amid roars of laughter we did it. But I couldn't escape! and finally to his great satisfaction I gave him my small pocket knife. To another son I gave an old flour tin and to Tutua one of those fine tins in which Mother and Father sent me some powdered milk. We heard that the R.C.'s are going to put up a station at Garnu's, but I don't know if it is so. Anyhow it is glorious the party has come and we shall be in first, and the same applies at Poko. *Garnu*

From ~~Jamru~~ we went S.E. again and almost at once met a messenger from his son Mofoi to conduct us to his village. We reached him in an hour and a half and found the rest house we had meant to sleep at was too far to reach before night. Most of the porters had taken another road to the latter, but we decided to sleep at Mofoi and luckily had the canteen and our beds. Mofoi was in high spirits as he was drinking their banana wine, but he gathered in a fine crowd of men, women and children for us to speak to, and we had a good meeting tho' rather disturbed. The Azande treat their women much more like slaves than the Mangbetu, whose women sit with them and take part in all their discussions, while the Azande women sit quite separate from the men. I slept well in Mangbetu Muke's blankets, a fire in the middle of the room (with Mr. Haas to wake up and stoke it) and the trunk of a banana tree as a pillow. We reached Vungba's next day at 10, and found our porters. He is the son of Gita, a different line of Avungura's. His father is prisoner at Niangara at present. "C. T." and I slept at Vungba's last February on our way to Poko. After a meeting and a meal we came on here, where we got our usual warm welcome from the people and general rejoicing that now they will have their "own white men" and will not be left again when the party comes.

I am so glad we took this road here and found all these Azande. The boundaries of the Azande South of the Welle are

1. Bomokandi river to the North.
2. Angwa river on the West.
3. Nala on the East.
4. The boundary of the Welle District on the S.

Besides this there are Azande in the land enclosed by the Bomokandi and Welle Rivers and as far east as the Makongo river. Last, there is the big Azandi Chief, Bokoyo, south of Dungu, with whom, however, we are not concerned, at present anyhow. In all the above region Azandi is spoken and it will, I think be necessary for those at Poko to learn Azandi. Mangbetu is pretty generally understood between Niangara, Nala and Gombari, while the Bakere round Zobia and Niapu and Doromo speak Mangbetu in a slightly altered dialect. These two are therefore the languages to learn, tho' perhaps Bangala will do among the Mangbetu peoples, as they live along the roads and a far greater proportion of them know Bangala than among the Azande.

ALFRED BARCLAY BUXTON.